

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-17 and 19-31 are currently pending. Claims 1, 3-9, 12, 15-17, 19-24 and 30-31 are amended. Claims 2 and 18 are canceled.

I. The Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 2-3 and 18-19 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 2.

Independent claim 17 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 18.

Claim 3 has been amended to be in independent form.

Claim 19 has been amended to be in independent form.

All of the other pending claims depend from allowable claims 1, 3, 17 and 18.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections of Claims 1, 4-17, 20-31 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Applicant admitted prior art (AAPA) in view of EP 1 160 591 A1 (Sadao et al) are moot and withdrawal is requested.

Application No.: 10/522,380
Art Unit: 2871

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. §1.111
Attorney Docket No.: 043087

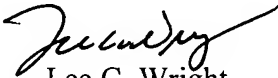
II. Conclusion

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that their claimed invention is allowable and ask that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 be reconsidered and withdrawn. Applicants respectfully submit that this case is in condition for allowance and allowance is respectfully solicited.

If any points remain at issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the local exchange number listed below.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,
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